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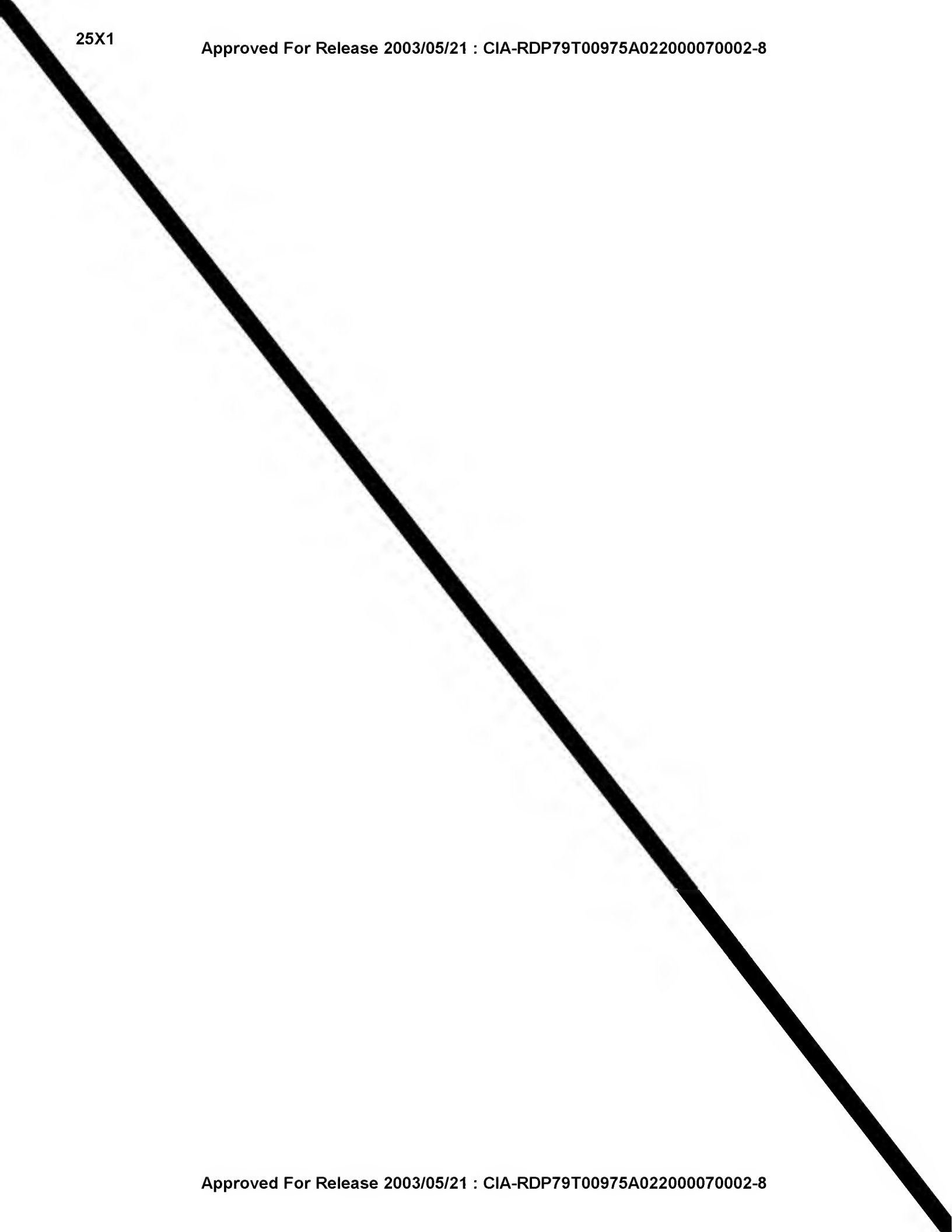

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CAMBODIA: Lon Nol's backers are pulling out all the stops to assure him a strong majority in the presidential election on Sunday.

As the campaign enters its final days, civilian and military elements of the government have organized numerous rallies for Lon Nol in Phnom Penh, and some of the more popular cabinet ministers have been flying to provincial centers to speak for the President. Lon Nol himself has campaigned in Kompong Cham, the home province of his only real opponent, In Tam. The government has also published favorable highlights of a recent medical examination of Lon Nol by a team of US physicians in order to counter opposition claims that his health has deteriorated.

Some of Lon Nol's supporters have also been engaging in heavy-handed campaign tactics. The governors of several provinces, for example, have refused to allow any canvassing for In Tam. Soldiers campaigning for the President reportedly have threatened those who would vote for In Tam with reprisals; in a few cases, they have roughed up civilians who refused to accept Lon Nol leaflets. Military commanders, meanwhile, are putting heavy pressure on their units to ensure that they vote for Lon Nol. Although such intimidation has stirred up some resentment among the voters, there is no evidence that these tactics will backfire and cause any substantial defections from the Lon Nol ranks.

With Lon Nol's political steamroller now running in high gear, In Tam appears to be more and more on the defensive. Some of his partisans apparently are beginning to waver and are reluctantly professing that wartime conditions demand that Lon Nol continue in power.

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